Toronto Theatre Scene

London Letter

Oct. 25-31, 1964, Vol. 2, No. 9

SCENE

THEATRE MAGAZINE

SANDOR SZABO RICHARD BENJAMIN MYRNA LOY JOAN VAN ARK

Royal Alex' Plays Broadway Hit —"BAREFOOT IN THE PARK"—

Hit Revue Continues at The Dell

ILLUSTRATING
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FASHION

TORONTO SCENE

THIS WEEK'S Crest Theatre benefit nights include **Pirandello's** *Henry IV* at the Coach House Theatre (923-3022); the Italian Piccollo Theatre in the Crest itself on Oct. 29-30 with **Carlo Goldani's** *Il Bugiardo* (The Liar) — example of La Commedia Dell'arte (HU 9-9703) and *Broadway Ashore* at the Poor Alex' (481-4252) . . . Forecast dept: climax to **Victor Borge's** show at the O'Keefe (Oct. 26-31) will be Listz's *Hungarian Rhapsody*. Borge and pianist **Leonid Hambro** meld into a nightmarish tangle of arms and legs on one piano — any part of the anatomy is used to keep the music going . . . From **Chuckles the Chipmunk** at Vineland to **Murray Burns** at the Poor Alex' — that's the saga of **Marvyn Goldhar** in *A Thousand Clowns,* opening Nov. 3 . . . **Malka** and **Joso** entertain at the Silver Rail's Centennial Room. One song is about a shepherd. **Malka** says "In Israel, we have no shepherds — but lots of shepherd songs" . . . A "golden" Bhudda is broken every night in *The Caretaker* at the Central Library. **Don Ewer,** playing **Davies,** bought twenty wholesale from the *African* Modern Shop . . . The evil magician **Ting Tang Tong** in *Sinbad the Sailor* (Museum Children's Theatre) casts spells and can imprison a voice in a bottle. Extra king size penguins played by 420 lbs. worth of **Franz Russell** and **Bob Koons** . . . Included in the **Canaletto** exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto are two paintings, *The Piazzetta Looking North* and *Canal of S. Chiara,* belonging to **Queen Elizabeth.** There are also 21 drawings from the Royal collection at Windsor . . . **Mrs. Ron** (Jazz on the Lake) **Arnold** is the adapter of **Chaucer's** *Canterbury Tales,* now playing at the Colonnade Theatre. A complete enactment of *The Pilgrim's Progress* at St. Lawrence Hall in 1857 took 3 weeks . . . Basic acting course by **Eduard Frensch** on Nov. 2 and 16 at Macey Hall, Scarboro', for stage aspirants . . .

SCENE Theatre Magazine Vol. 2 No. 9 — Oct. 25-31

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Stan Helleur, Editor and Art Director **Fiona McCall,** Assistant Editor

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BAREFOOT IN THE PARK

ALTHOUGH she has made countless other movies with leading men ranging from the late Clark Gable to Rex Harrison and Cary Grant, Myrna Loy is still most widely remembered as the suave and elegant Nora Charles, the sophisticated, ideal wife in the motion picture series, *The Thin Man.*

She's getting used to the fact that when she comes off stage the youngsters ask for her autograph — not for Barefoot or any of her other recent stage and movie appearances but because: "We see you on the late, late show." Miss Loy admits ruefully that *The Thin Man* impression is so strong that people still expect her to come on stage with a dog.

Her identity with the series even caused problems for her in *Barefoot in the Park.* She plays the part of Mrs. Brooks, the pleasant, recently-widowed, affectionate and helpful mother of a six-day bride. In New

Sandor Szabo offers a doubtful Myrna Loy a goodie while Richard Benjamin and Joan Van Ark look on.

Broadway hit brings Myrna Loy, one of the screen's foremost actresses, to the Alex'

York, Mildred Natwick played her as a sheltered unsophisticate, trying to find her niche in a bewildering world.

Myrna Loy realised that after the Thin Man series it would be very difficult for audiences to accept her as a naive and sheltered woman — so she had to cast about for a very different, though still valid interpretation. So Ethel Brooks becomes a woman with some worldly knowledge, who has retreated into herself after losing her husband, wary of involvement with another man.

"It's lucky that Neil Simon has created the kind of delightful offbeat characters who can be interpreted in a number of ways," said Miss Loy.

A movie star for over 30 years, it was only in 1961 that *Marriage-Go-Round* provided Myrna Loy with a debut on the legitimate stage — a debut that broke house records in every theatre in which she has performed. Since then she has appeared in *There Must Be a Pony* and, at the Drury Lane Theatre in Chicago, in the William McCleery play, *Good Housekeeping*.

Working on stage or on film depends entirely on the parts she is offered, though Miss Loy admits that she finds theatre very exhilarating — especially in comedy where the audience reacts so vividly.

"The movies are a great medium — but they are extremely difficult technically. You are always starting a scene and stopping. That seems easy, but it's not. Sometimes you have to keep a scene alive for days."

There's a lot of stopping and

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starting in *Barefoot in the Park* too, but Miss Loy doesn't mind that. No comedienne is going to complain about a show-stopper called laughter.

But her identification with legit is so strong that in her spare time in New York she is very actively associated with a project that she feels is of real value to the theatre. It is called The American Place and provides a kind of breaking-in ground for new playwrights or playwrights who are experiencing problems. Plays are rehearsed by professional actors and presented before invited audiences. At the moment the venture is privately supported, but hopes for an eventual Ford Foundation grant run high.

Barefoot in the Park tells of a blithe young couple who merrily set up their home in a sixth-floor Manhattan apartment with no elevator. They are on the sixth day of their honeymoon and everyone, just everyone, wants to give advice and be helpful.

Touring with a company is a new experience for Myrna Loy, but she is enjoying moving from place to place and having time to look around. "Usually I seem to just see cities from the air as I fly over."

But touring also means learning for Myrna Loy.

"We're enriching our lives as we go along," she says. "And it's such fun, too. We are a small cast and we can do things together, like exploring new restaurants."

And a philosophy for one of Hollywood's most glamorous and successful actresses? In her own words: "There is what might be called glamour, but underneath it is a lot of hard work."

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ACTUALLY THIS AUTUMN MAY EXTEND INTO SPRING

Performer/writer, Roderick Cook, writes strictly for laughs

APART from odd references in the opening number and in two other skits, *Actually This Autumn*, the revue now running at the Dell Tavern, is surprisingly un-Canadian in content. Which perhaps *isn't* surprising, since the three performers involved are English and one of them, Roderick Cook, wrote seven of the 18 numbers.

Restoration comedy is the target for (left to right) John Church, Pat Galloway and Roderick Cook, starring in their revue, "Actually This Autumn" at the Dell Tavern.

Cook's presence this side of the Atlantic still surprises him. He had just finished playing in a London revue, *Share My Lettuce*, when he received a letter from Elizabeth Seal, starring as the prostitute in *Irma La Douce* on Broadway. "You deserve a holiday after a year's run" she wrote, "New York is fabulous. Come on over".

Cook packed his bags and went. At a party he met Miss Seal's press agent and his very English "How do you do" (still prominent after nearly two years in North America) compelled the agent to say he had just the part for him.

The part was in a musical, *Kean*, with Alfred Drake. Unfortunately the public wasn't overly "Kean" and the show closed after three months. But it was long enough for Cook to decide to stay in the U.S. He

directed summer theatre in Maine, played *Becket* in Houston and made his Canadian debut in Henry Kaplan's production of *La Bonne Soupe* at the Crest.

Also in this production were one Pat Galloway and Tom Kneebone. They spent a lot of time together, swapping revue stories. Both Galloway and Kneebone were already established revue performers in Canada. While Cook had not established any particular reputation in England in this field, he had done a lot of revue work at Cambridge and played in the last home of Victorian music hall revue in London, the Players Theatre. His renderings of such items as *Rhoda and Her Pagoda* and *On a Cycle with the Girl you Love* (the girl in point was Patsy Rowlands, the maid in *Tom Jones*) broke up Miss Galloway and Kneebone.

Out of it emerged one idea — a revue for the three of them. Miss Galloway remembered a little pub in Stratford, Ont. which she thought might be suitable, Cook got out his typewriter and Kneebone researched material. The result: *Suddenly Last Summer*, a revue that packed them in at Stratford in 1963.

The 1964 version (minus Kneebone) is now firmly entrenched at the Dell Tavern.

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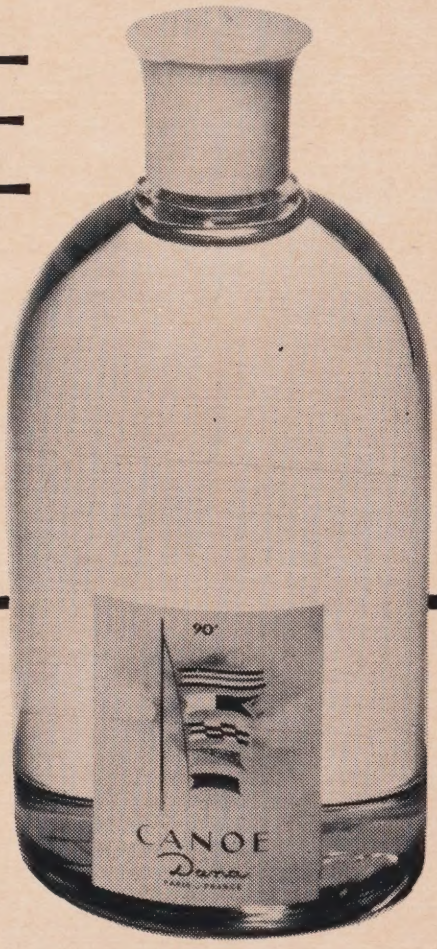

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RICHARD BENJAMIN

JOAN VAN ARK

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"BAREFOOT IN THE PARK"

Setting Designed by

OLIVER SMITH

Lighting by

JEAN ROSENTHAL

Costumes by

DONALD BROOKS

Directed by

MIKE NICHOLS

CAST

(In order of appearance)

Corie Bratter ..... JOAN VAN ARK
Telephone Man ..... LOU TIANO
Delivery Man ..... PAUL HANEY
Paul Bratter ..... RICHARD BENJAMIN
Mrs. Banks ..... MYRNA LOY
Victor Velasco ..... SANDOR SZABO

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The Bratters' Apartment on East 48th Street, New York.

ACT I

Late Afternoon.

INTERMISSION
(10 minutes)

ACT II

Scene 1: Four days later—7 P.M.
Scene 2: The same night—2 A.M.

INTERMISSION
(10 minutes)

ACT III

The following day.

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement for the appearance is made at the time of the performance.

For Miss Loy—Carolyn Brenner; For Messrs. Benjamin, Tiano and Haney—Jerry Mickey; For Miss Van Ark—Geraldine Court; For Mr. Szabo—Paul Haney.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

MYRNA LOY (Mrs. Banks) — Long revered as one of Hollywood's most beloved stars and most brilliant comediennes, Miss Loy is perhaps most widely remembered as the suave and elegant Nora Charles in the motion picture series, "The Thin Man" in which she co-starred with William Powell. While reigning as one of filmdom's foremost stars, her roster of leading men became a veritable Who's Who of the screen's most notable actors. This list included, in addition to the aforementioned Mr. Powell, Ronald Colman, Cary Grant, John Barrymore, Robert Montgomery, Spencer Tracy, Humphrey Bogart, Tyrone Power, Fredric March, Rex Harrison and, of course, the late Clark Gable. The many motion pictures in which she co-starred with Gable included "Men in White," "Wife vs. Secretary," "Man-

hattan Melodrama,' "Parnell," "Too Hot to Handle," "Test Pilot" and "Night Flight." Other films in which she appeared with William Powell, with her customary zest, charm and insouciance, were "The Great Ziegfeld," "Libeled Lady," "I Love You Again," "The Senator Was Indiscreet" and "Love Crazy." Her first professional appearance, she recalls, was as a gilded, slant-eyed dancer in a live performance at Grauman's Egyptian Theatre. It was at this time that Rudolph Valentino saw her and she was chosen to play an exotic siren in his wife's movie, "What Price Beauty." With Warner Brothers, she played an Arabian dancer, followed by roles in which the red-haired girl from Montana played Chinese, Japanese, Malayan, Polynesian and Indian *femmes fatale*. Her next long-term contract, with M-G-M, brought forth the famous "Thin Man" series, which established her as a permanent symbol of the charming, elegant, sophisticated, ideal wife. In 1950 she became the first big star to combine serious public service with her professional career. Since that date she has been closely identified with and officially active in UNESCO and the American Association of the United Nations. Miss Loy was voted one of the top ten box-office attractions by nationwide motion picture exhibitors — and a climactic triumph of her screen stardom was "The Best Years of Our Lives," the Samuel Goldwyn production that set an all-time record for Academy Awards and for which Miss Loy was awarded the Brussels World Film Festival Prize for best performance by an actress. Her more recent films include "Lonelyhearts" with Montgomery Clift, "From the Terrace" with Paul Newman, and "Midnight Lace" with Rex Harrison. In the summer of 1961, Miss Loy made her first appearance on the legitimate stage in a tour of Broadway's hit comedy, "Marriage - Go - Round," with Claude Dauphin, establishing new house records in every theatre in which she performed. Since then, she has appeared in "There Must Be a Pony" and, at the Drury Lane Theatre in Chicago, in the William McCleery play, "Good Housekeeping."

RICHARD BENJAMIN (Paul Bratter) — In the four short years since his graduation from Northwestern University, Mr. Benjamin has had such varied experiences in the theatre as acting Shakespeare in the Summer Festival productions in Manhattan's Central Park, and working behind the scenes as stage manager and also as director. He has, during this same period, found time to marry a former school-mate from the drama classes of Northwestern — Paula Prentiss, who already has become established as an actress in films. At Northwestern, he worked under Alvina Krause, and upon graduation immediately went into the Joseph Papp production of "The Taming of the Shrew." During the two-year period he spent with the Shakespeare Festival company, Miss Prentiss joined him, to share with him two of the major roles in "As You Like It." At the age of eleven he had played Scrooge in a fifth-grade Christmas play, which seemingly convinced him that the theatre was to be his home. Later, he attended the High School of Performing Arts, which combined an academic program with training for a dramatic career. During his college years, he had his own disc jockey show as well as undergoing a rigorous class program of acting, directing and producing everything from the classics to modern comedy. Following his stint with the Shakespeare productions in Manhattan, Benjamin toured in a featured role in "Tchin Tchin," in which he appeared with Martha Scott and John Vivyan. A later acting assignment was in the production of "A Thousand Clowns" in which Van Johnson was starred.

JOAN VAN ARK (Corie Bratter) — Born in Boulder, Colorado, Miss Van Ark became smitten with the stage after seeing Julie Harris' performance in "The Lark" at the Central City opera house. Launching off in high school dramatics, she soon found herself playing leads for both the University of Colorado Theatre and the Bonfils Theatre for the Nomads. Yale Drama School followed, where Miss Van Ark became the youngest girl ever to have been enrolled. Leaving Yale in June, 1962, she immediately became a part of Tyrone Guthrie's original repertory company which opened the new theatre, in Minneapolis, bearing his name. As a resident member of this august group, she played Marianne in "The Miser," Letta in "Death of a Salesman," and under-studied the roles of both Masha and Irina in Chekhov's "The Three Sisters." Folowing this, Miss Van Ark became resident ingenue of Washington's noted Arena Stage Theatre, where she won plaudits as Victoire in "Hotel Paradiso," as Halinka in Millard Lampell's drama of the Warsaw Ghetto, "The Wall," and as Bianca in Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew." Here, she also was seen to advantage in Pirandello's "Enrico IV" and as the love-crossed Barbara Allen in the fantasy "Dark of the Moon." In her native Colorado, she has carried important roles in a long list of plays including "Dark at

the Top of the Stairs," "Sunrise at Campobello," "All the Way Home" and "Another Part of the Forest." She has also played such widely contrasting parts as Joan in the opera "Joan of Arc at the Stake," Annie Oakley in "Annie Get Your Gun," Bonnie Jean (the dance lead) in "Brigadoon," and Anne Frank in "The Diary of Anne Frank."

SANDOR SZABO (Victor Velasco) — Mr. Szabo, last on Broadway in Jerome Robbins' production of "Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling So Sad," was an established star of stage and screen in his native Hungary before leaving in 1956. He appeared regularly at the famous National Theatre in Budapest in such varied roles as Romeo, Hamlet, Cyrano de Bergerac and Matt in Eugene O'Neill's "Anna Christie." Shortly after his arrival in the United States, he was awarded a Rockefeller grant to the American National Theatre and Academy and won his first English-speaking part in the play, "Goodwill Ambassador," which was done in Dublin, Ireland. Following a highly successful run in the off-Broadway production of "The Three Sisters," he made his Broadway debut in "Big Fish, Little Fish" and scored a personal success as the Commodore in the aforementioned "Oh Dad, Poor Dad, etc." Mr. Szabo has appeared in leading roles in such major TV series as Dr. Kildare, The Defenders and Sea Hunt. In 1957, he was the subject of an Omnibus TV presentation based upon his life which was narrated by Helen Hayes.

LOU TIANO (Telephone Man) — Lou Tiano studied acting at the Herbert Berghof Studio for several years before emerging as a full-fledged performer. He has appeared in the motion picture, "The World of Henry Orient," as well as on a number of important TV programs including Naked City, The Reporter and the Kraft Theatre. A man of diverse interests, he prides himself on having boxed professionally, on and off, over a period of ten years. And though he was for two years a student at New York University, he still enjoys recalling that for a time he drove a Manhattan taxi-cab while waiting for his chance in the theatre. He has appeared in a number of stock company productions, including such contrasting dramas as "Detective Story" and "The Lark."

PAUL HANEY (Delivery Man) — Born into show business, Mr. Heney's early recollections center upon the amusement park which his parents managed over a period of years. Bent on preparing for a stage career, he studied at Emerson College, Boston; St. Vincent College, Latrobe, Pennsylvania; the Chicago Art Institute; and Fordham University in New York City. He insists, however, that he gained his first theatrical assignment merely by answering a want ad. He toured as production stage manager for the National Company of "The Miracle Worker," after which he made another cross-country journey with the National Company of Arthur Miller's "A View From the Bridge," in which he played the role of Alfieri.

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THE CARETAKER

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IF TORONTO actor, Don Ewer, had his way, Toronto would have a permanent theatre specializing in comedies. One of the relatively few professional actors in Toronto managing to make his living at it, he feels very strongly that theatre exists to give the public what it wants.

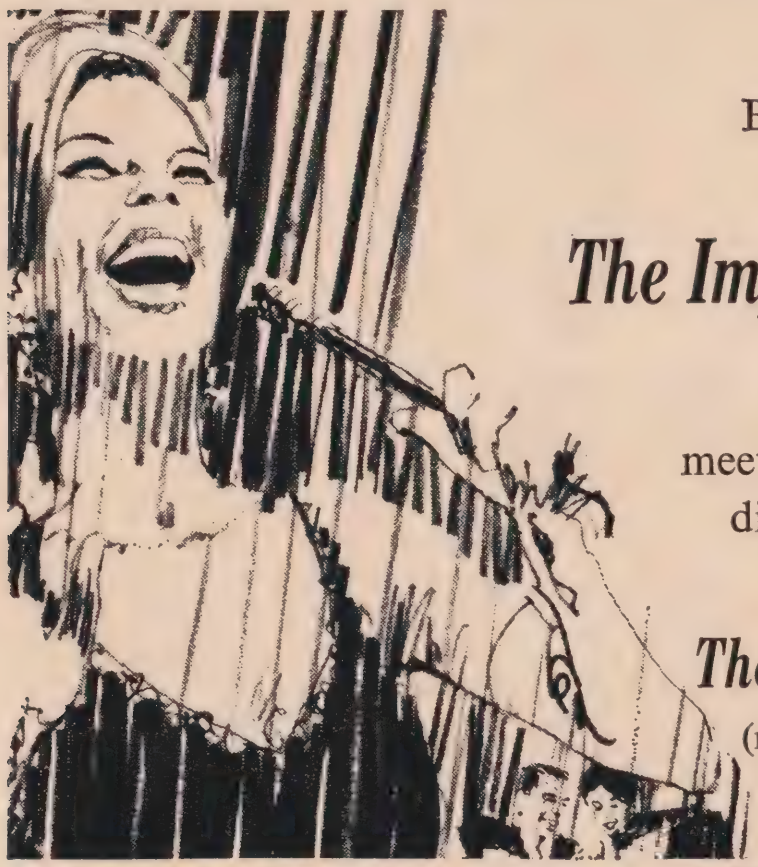
"People want to laugh," he maintains. "They go to the theatre nowadays simply to be amused. The theatre is a business just like any other business, and if it is going to pay its way – and after all this is the premise of any commercial propo-

sition – then it must be aware of the current demand".

Ewer's dream is a theatre named "House of Comedy". Shows would range from Shakespearean comedies, Restoration comedies, Racine, Ben Travers' farces to Jewish comedies. He even has a first season planned — *The Country Wife, Charley's Aunt, Thark, The Miser* and *The Relapse.*

But at the moment he's fully occupied playing the lead in Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* which opened at the Central Library Theatre Oct. 14. Interpreted by some as a comment on Fascism and Communism, by others as a modern view of the Holy Trinity, Ewer himself insists the play is simply a wildly funny piece of theatre.

Directed by Herbert Whittaker, this same production of *The Caretaker* was performed at the Coach House last March. The rave notices resulted in capacity houses and a profit for the Women's Alumnae. It also resulted in Ewer looking for a larger theatre, hence the current location in the Central Library.



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MALKA and JOSO open Silver Rail's CENTENNIAL ROOM

October 12 saw the opening of Toronto's newest dining-with-entertainment room — it's the Silver Rail's refurbished dining room, now re-named The Centennial Room. The theme has been inspired by the already existing murals on the walls, depicting scenes of 100 years ago.

Providing a sophisticated background are Toronto's best known folk-singing duo, Malka and Joso.

Born in Israel, Malka met Joso, who is from Yugoslavia, in a Toronto coffee house. With their very different backgrounds, they started "swapping" songs. While learning the new material they sang in harmony, and it was as a joke that one night they slipped across the street and laughingly sang some of their "new" songs together. When the audience wouldn't let them go, they began to realize that as a combination they had something more to offer.

LONDON
SCENE

HARD on the heels of the latest **James Bond** film *Goldfinger* comes a cartoon *Goldwhiskers.* It's about a mouse who likes his girl friends covered entirely in cheese . . . Pop singer **Screaming Lord Sutch** challenges Labour Party Leader **Harold Wilson** at the General Election. His Program? Knighthoods for the **Beatles** . . . English definition of a mixed marriage — union between the Mods and Rockers . . . Coming to London next Spring, the **Actors Studio Theatre** of New York. They're invited to the second World Theatre season at the Aldwych, opening March 15. Program will include **Chekhov's** *The Three Sisters* and probably **James Baldwin's** *Blues for Mr. Charlie* . . . **Lionel Bart's** *Maggie May* a rollicking hit in London. Special mention made of choreography by Winnipeg's **Paddy Stone** and direction by Toronto's **William Kotcheff. Peter Sellers** new company has the film rights (he has also acquired rights to **Bart's** now-in-the-works musical on Robin Hood); **David Merrick** wants the show for Broadway . . . Plans afoot to build a reproduction of **Shakespeare's** original Globe Theatre near the actual Southwark site. Two years too late for the Quadracentennial, though . . . Renovations to two theatres. The Royal Opera House has lost its top gallery — but the first balcony has

(Continued on next page)

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LONDON SCENE

(Continued from previous page)

been enlarged. Seating capacity lost is 57 seats — but velvet replaces those cramped, no-back benches . . . the Royal Court also completely remodernised . . . Canadian playwright **Jack Gray** invited to contribute a drama to the upcoming Commonwealth Arts Festival . . . The Times tips the latest **John Osborne** play as his best. *Inadmissable Evidence* now at the Royal Court . . . For 16 years South Ken. Science Museum has displayed a model of the first-powered aircraft. Officials have only just found out the model is so inaccurate that the real thing would never have got off the ground. New model in the works . . . *110 in the Shade* has to cool its heels before reaching London. Scheduled for the Palace Theatre — but the present show *The Sound of Music* may run till 1966. . . .

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FROM "DOWN UNDER" TO THE ROYAL YORK

ONE of the most exciting new acts in showbusiness—Lynn Rogers and the Maori Hi-Quinns—are headlining the current show in the Royal York's elegant Imperial Room. The engagement marks their North American debut but local audiences may still have a feeling they've seen the five New Zealand boys and one Australian girl before. And they *would* have if they'd caught the Walt Disney film, "The Castaways," starring Maurice Chevalier. The group had a featured role. Versatility is the essence of the act; they sing, dance, do impressions and work in both modern dress and native costumes. One of their show-stoppers is a Maori war dance.

COMING EVENTS

Now Playing — **Royal Alex'**, Barefoot in the Park; **O'Keefe Centre,** Victor Borge; **Dell Tavern,** Actually This Autumn; **Central Library,** The Caretaker; **Coach House,** Pirandello's Henry IV; **Museum Children's Theatre,** Sinbad the Sailor; **Colonnade Theatre,** Canterbury Tales; **Hart House,** Diary of a Scoundrel

Oct. 26	**Eaton Auditorium**	Blind Artists Concert
Oct. 26-31	**O'Keefe Centre**	Victor Borge
Oct. 27-28	**Massey Hall**	Toronto Symphony (Malcolm Frager)
From Oct. 27	**Poor Alex'**	Broadway Ashore (Variety Productions)
Oct. 29	**Maple Leaf Gardens**	Pomp and Ceremony
Oct. 29-30'	**Crest Theatre**	Il Bugiardo (Piccolo Theatre), on behalf of the Crest Theatre
Nov. 1	**Massey Hall**	Warsaw Philharmonic
Nov. 3-14	**Poor Alex'**	A Thousand Clowns (Velmar Productions)
Nov. 4-14	**Colonnade**	Mandragola (Halewyn Productions)
Nov. 6	**Massey Hall**	Obenkirchen Children's Choir
Nov. 8 (p.m.)	**Poor Alex'**	Canadian One Act Play Festival
Nov. 8	**Royal Alex'**	Gala Benefit Night on behalf of the Crest Theatre
Nov. 9	**Crest Theatre**	Organ demonstration and recital on behalf of the Crest
Nov. 10-11	**Massey Hall**	Toronto Symphony—Canadian premiere War Requiem
Nov. 19	**Eaton Auditorium**	Peter Serkin, pianist
Nov. 23—Dec. 5	**Royal Alex'**	Not in the Stars
Nov. 24-25	**Massey Hall**	Toronto Symphony, pianist Daniel Barenboim
Nov. 25—Dec. 5	**Poor Alex'**	Musical Revue (The Questers)
Nov. 27—Dec. 5	**Hart House**	The One Day of the Year
Nov. 29	**Maple Leaf Gardens**	Harlem Globe Trotters
Nov. 29	**Poor Alex'**	James Joyce Society
Nov. 29	**Royal Alex'**	Toronto Chamber Orchestra Society (Fred Geohegon, Organist)
Nov. 30—Dec. 19	**O'Keefe Centre**	After The Fall
Dec. 1-8	**Maple Leaf Gardens**	Ice Capades
Dec. 3 (p.m.)	**Eaton Auditorium**	The Festival Singers
Dec. 7-12	**Royal Alex'**	Pajama Top
Dec. 8-9	**Massey Hall**	Toronto Symphony Orchestra (Leonid Kogan, violinist)

Scheduled for November sometime, Workshop Productions — The World of Woyzeck

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